

Indigenous Perspectives in Recreation: A Listening Project



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Applied Research Project - Recreation Studies,
Langara College

There is not one knowledge. This work recognizes that our current understanding of recreation is deeply rooted in a narrow western colonized worldview. It advocates the value of exploring another worldview in recreation – Indigenous perspectives. And how we can incorporate that learning into our teaching in recreation. It is an invitation to a deeper exploration of how we understand recreation and the opportunity to understand recreation in a fuller way.

**APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT - RECREATION STUDIES, LANGARA
COLLEGE**

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Appendix A - Applied Research Project Proposal

This work was written on the ancestral, unceded and occupied territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ (Tseil-Watuth) nations of the Coast Salish peoples - whose relationship with the land is ancient, primary and enduring. I would like to acknowledge my privilege to be here learning, living and working on these lands.

I am grateful for the knowledge that was shared for this work by Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples including Elders, formal and informal teachers, scholars and story tellers.

Coyote



I was running through the forest in North Vancouver in the early morning— a wilderness Park governed by Metro Vancouver Regional Parks. It is a forest I know well and have run and hiked thousands of times. My brain spins as I run sorting out my roles in my family, work, community within this Covid-19 pandemic. I have been running the same route every morning since Phase 1 Quarantine started. At an intersection in the trail a large dog crosses my path, it looks like German Shepard but different. It isn't wearing a collar or a leash and I don't see an owner. The dog runs straight ahead on the trail, but oddly sideways.

Slowly I realize it is a coyote. My realization doesn't affect the coyote and he lopes down the trail. I feel a jolt of fear, mixed with surprise that a coyote would be in this civilized wilderness park, with trail signs and Park Rangers.

My encounter with Coyote symbolizes the crossing of two worldviews – the white world way of knowing/seeing and an Indigenous world way of knowing/seeing. One perspective is that the park is owned and regulated by the government - that it is civilized-- Coyote interrupts this with his wildness. My first reaction is the white man perspective - Coyote is in my park and threatens my security. Parks are designated spaces with boundaries - Coyote is inside the boundaries. Another world view - this is Coyote's land, home, that there may be deeper meaning to this crossing of paths with Coyote. What could I learn from Coyote? In First Nations stories, Coyote has a reputation as a trickster. I am on Coyote land, and maybe Coyote is here to teach me something....a different way of knowing, of understanding.

In her book, *Indigenous Storywork, Educating the Heart, Mind, Body and Spirit*, Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xiiem, talks about the role of Coyote, "Among many First Nations, Coyote and her/his/its many manifestations is considered a Trickster character who has lots to learn and teach while travelling the world. The English word "trickster" is a poor one because it cannot portray the diverse range of ideas that First Nations associate with the Trickster, who sometimes is like a magician, an enchanter, an absurd prankster, or a Shaman, who sometimes is a shape shifter, and who often takes on human characteristics. Trickster is a transformer figure, one whose transformations often use humour, satire, self-mocking, and absurdity to carry good lessons." (2008, p. 5)

Another way of knowing. A different world view. I am challenged by Coyote to look beyond what I have seen all of my life. To learn a new perspective that creates a deeper and more whole world view of recreation. This requires me to deconstruct what I have learned and knew to be true – to see it as just one perspective or way of knowing – my own established world view. This deconstruction is disorienting – but it is also curious and exciting to glimpse another worldview and way of knowing and to critically challenge my pedagogy as a recreation educator.

Note: In the photo there is a Metro Vancouver Regional Parks signpost – white paradigm overlaid on the traditional territory of the coyote.

Introduction

This Applied Research Project report may seem unorthodox in its approach, organization and writing – and that is the point. It is an opportunity for this academic researcher and teacher to step outside of academic self -- to experience a different way of learning and sharing knowledge. And in that action of stepping out – experience a different worldview and the effects that this perspective could have on teaching and learning in recreation.

There is not one knowledge. This work recognizes that our current understanding of recreation is deeply rooted in a narrow western colonized worldview. It advocates the value of exploring another worldview in recreation – Indigenous perspectives. And how we can incorporate that learning into our teaching in recreation. It is an invitation to a deeper exploration of how we understand recreation and the opportunity to understand recreation in a fuller way.

This work recognizes the need to learn and unlearn – acknowledging where our current understanding of recreation is situated and how that may restrict us understanding recreation in a fuller way.

This report explores differences between Western and Indigenous worldviews. It asks questions about what the impacts of those worldviews are on gaining a fuller understanding of recreation. Decolonization is explored as a path to critically examine where our understanding of recreation is currently situated. Indigenous perspectives and practices of identity, self-location and connection to the land are explored. Story Telling and First People's Learning Principles are reflected as a framework to use for pedagogy within Recreation education. This work also shares actions taken by the researcher within her classes with the intention of increasing awareness of indigenous worldviews and perspectives to encourage a deeper understanding of recreation.

There is a responsibility to do this work as Langara College and our work as faculty in the Department of Recreation Studies is situated on the unceded and traditional territory of the Musqueam First Nation.

This work is offered not because it is the "right" thing to do within our Canadian context of reconciliation, but because of the value understanding Indigenous perspectives of recreation brings to our way of knowing. This research is approached with the awareness of the impact and legacy of colonization of Canada's Indigenous people and with the values of respect, humility, openness, curiosity and responsibility.

Background and Context

The ideas in this research project represent a coming together of initiatives that made the path clearer and the time right for this work.

Within the RECR 1160: Foundations of Leisure and Recreation course, there is a section on historical influences of recreation in Canada. It begins with Greek philosophers and their ideas of leisure and recreation and moves through the Industrial Revolution in Europe and into early Canadian history. The Playground movement recognized as the beginning of Canadian Community Recreation Centres began in Boston, MA in 1885 and spread to Canada in 1906. Boys and Girls Clubs originated in the Eastern United States in the late 1860's and the YMCA started in England and was established in Canada in 1886 (McLean and Hurd 2012). Absent in this historical influences of recreation in Canada is an understanding and recognition of Indigenous perspectives of Recreation.

Within the recreation field there has recently been significant commitment by the Vancouver Park Board to address some of the Calls to Action that came out of the Truth and Reconciliation Report. In June 2015, City of Vancouver Council passed a motion directing staff to provide recommendations on how to move forward on actions recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). Following this, the Urban Aboriginal Committee passed a motion requesting the Park Board also undertake a review of the TRC Calls to Action and in January 2016, Vancouver Park Board directed staff to take on 11 strategies which fall within Park Board jurisdiction (Todd 2017).

Within the landscape of community recreation, this move by a large Municipal organization to recognize and support reconciliation and lead change is important in creating a recreation lens to look at how this work can be done. The Vancouver Park Board vision for reconciliation is “An evolvable organization in which every employee and Commissioner recognizes the humanity in themselves by recognizing and respecting the humanity of First Peoples; and an organization that sets a worldwide example in treating Reconciliation as a decolonization process.” (Vancouver Park Board).

Langara College is working to strengthen the connections between the Musqueam people and the College with is situated on Musqueam land . Actions by Langara College reflect an understanding of their role and responsibility to First Nations as a Post Secondary Institute. Within the Academic plan, priority three is Aboriginal Initiatives and this focus has created awareness and support for the value of indigenous knowledge and perspectives. The Teaching and Curriculum Development Centre (TCDC) recently hired an Indigenous Curriculum consultant, Natalie Knight to support faculty in examining ways to indigenize curriculum. In a naming ceremony on January 11, 2016, Langara received the Musqueam name meaning house of teachings:



Another initiative that aligns with this research project is the recent publication of “Pulling Together: A Guide for Indigenization of Post-Secondary Institutions – Professional Learning Series” by BC Campus, guided by the Indigenization Project Steering Committee. This series of publications encourages and supports Post Secondary Instructors and Administrators in

bringing indigenous perspectives into their work. The authors of the Foundations Guide for Indigenization of Post Secondary Institutions document, quote Universities Canada, “Higher education offers great potential for reconciliation and a renewed relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.” (2015) and similarly, Colleges and Institutions Canada notes that “Indigenous education will strengthen colleges’ and institutes’ contribution to improving the lives of learners and communities.” (Wilson 2019).

In their guide for Teachers and Instructors within the Pulling Together series, authors state, “As public post-secondary teachers and instructors, we have a responsibility to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills necessary to work with and build relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities....Indigenous issues can no longer be considered a fringe concern; instead, Indigenous views, perspectives, and self-determination form part of the learning landscape in our institutions.” (Allan, Biin, Chenoweth et al 2019)

The Alignment of the Vancouver Park Board’s commitment to reconciliation and decolonizing the Vancouver Park Board, Langara’s commitment to building a relationship with Musqueam, and growing awareness of the value of indigenous perspectives within Post Secondary, creates opportune timing and support for this research to move forward.

Listening Project:

Approaching this research as a listening project seemed to be the right methodology to bring to this work. Listening with the whole self as the quote below references provided a way to authentically approach the knowledge and offered a new way to do research that challenged my own culture of research and encouraged curiosity and a learning spirit.

As an educator I am often reminded that listening with our whole self is not necessarily practised in the academy. I learned this the hard way. One of my instructors in my graduate program pointed out to me that I rarely “spoke up” in class. I reflected upon this feedback and thought of all the times that I was eager to participate in the classroom dialogue, only to be “beaten to the punch” by classmates who either spoke up as soon as one had finished speaking or who seemingly dominated the classroom dialogue (almost always!). This self-reflection led me to understand the different ways I, as an Indigenous person, listen in comparison to many of my non-Indigenous counterparts. I began to recognize that oftentimes people would be preparing what they were going to say while the other person was still talking. While I on the other hand listened, completely listened, and only when one finishes speaking do I think about how I might respond. This is true, I came to learn, for many of the Indigenous students in my classes and at our university. (Shirley Hardman – personal communication, 2017) in Pulling Together – (Allan, Biin, Chenoweth et al 2019)

The following perspectives provided a framework for me to understand what is involved in listening, how to also listen for my own values, beliefs and perceptions – how to trust the unlearning and relearning process – and how to listen with the understanding that this is my work to do:

“Listening to hear requires that you hold the information that has been shared in order for multiple meanings to come forward, rather than immediately responding or reacting. What you are hearing are your values, beliefs, and perceptions sifting through the shared information” (Allan, Biin, Chenoweth et al 2019)

“A productive pedagogical approach therefore is to build into courses a methodology that reminds students – and teachers – that dis-ease can be a valuable starting point for a more healthy alliance with Indigenous people...[L]istening – or hearing – that the “other” has to say, in fact, must be a risk-taking venture in order for a change in thought, perception and action to occur. If we are only to hear what is safe or familiar, there will be no conflict, no “poles of contradiction”, no impetus or motivation for transformation.” (McGloin 2015).

“What a teacher needs to be mindful of is that Indigenizing one’s practice is an emotional journey as well as an intellectual examination of how systems of knowledge can complement and coexist in any field of study.” (Allan, Biin, Chenoweth et al 2019)

“The complexity of Indigenization is realizing that there are multiple truths and no single clear answer; so as educators, we need to trust the unlearning and relearning process and be humble while engaging in the process.” (Allan, Biin, Chenoweth et al 2019)

“Ask your questions with the understanding that some of the work required to answer them is yours. Ask whose truths are valued and represented in your curriculum and discipline, what counts as knowledge, and why this is. Be aware of the space you take and the space you give...entails giving yourself time to explore and appreciate Indigenous worldviews and taking the time to understand and disrupt beliefs and misconceptions.” (Allan, Biin, Chenoweth et al 2019)

Situating myself and this work

I was born in British Columbia and am of United Kingdom and European ancestry. I have been teaching in the Recreation Studies Department of Langara for 15 years. Prior to that I worked in Municipal Recreation with Burnaby Parks, Recreation and Culture. I grew up on the West Coast of Vancouver Island in a remote village on Nuu-Chah-Nulth lands only accessible by boat. When I was seven, we moved to Campbell River and I took Native Studies as part of my elementary school curriculum I learned about the kwakwaka'wakw First Nation – language and traditions. When I was ten I attended a potlach in Alert Bay as part of this learning. I was 15 when our family moved to East Vancouver and moved away from connections and learning from First Nations.

Recently as events and ideas have come together I have been humbled by my own narrow view of the world and of recreation. I have started to ask questions about whose knowledge is dominant and why in recreation, and what I am missing by not seeing other perspectives.

Two key events set me on this path to learn more about indigenous perspectives in recreation. The first is reflected in the following story:

Fall, 2018 -- I am standing at the front of the RECR 1160 class – teaching about the History of Recreation in Canada. I started with the Greeks and Romans and have moved through the Industrial revolution and into the Playground movement of 1885 which represents the beginnings of Public Recreation in Canada – when I have a moment of realization – that this is a specific perspective and way of knowing recreation. It strikes me that important voices are missing from this history – Indigenous people of Canada. I think about why their voices are

missing – and what bigger understanding we are missing in recreation by not including indigenous perspectives.

The History of Recreation in Canada is a colonized story that eclipses other world views – and that doesn't benefit the students in learning about Recreation in Canada. I realize that I have a responsibility to learn and offer a more diverse and inclusive history to the students.

The second event that challenged my thinking about what I know occurred in June 2019 when I attended the Vancouver Mountain Film Festival MEC Panel Presentation. A diverse panel of speakers were asked to share their experiences with Outdoor Recreation. The first speaker presented on his recent expedition to Northern Canada where he and a friend battled big storms and epic challenges to attempt a first summit. It was interesting and inspiring to see how this expedition tested the speaker and what he learned about himself from it. It was a traditional expedition narrative about man conquering nature.

Another speaker on the panel was Myia Antone of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation). She had recently returned from an extended period of time living in the North West Territories, reconnecting to her culture and nature. Myia received funding from MEC Outdoor Nation to support a hiking group she formed for the women in her community. Tá7elnexwtway (Understanding each other), is a way to empower Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh matriarchs to re-occupy their traditional land through outdoor activity.

Her description of connecting to nature was strikingly different than the previous speaker. She talked about a different way of connecting to the land. She questioned the purpose of expeditions – asking what their relationship is to the land – what do they take, what do they give? She talked about reciprocity in connecting to nature – asking consent from the land and giving back to the land. She questioned the perspective of “playing” in sacred nature spaces.

There was an important difference in her world view, in her language. When she talked about the land it was with connection and reverence. In her presenter bio she says, “I think the mentality of the outdoor industry needs to change. By changing this mentality, spaces will open where everyone will be able to feel and respect Indigenous peoples' love for their own land and waters and understand the histories of those places. I respect Mother Earth and I know she protects me while I'm out there. I have a connection to my lands and waters that is indescribable and magical.” (Antone, 2019).

The difference in world views and relationship to nature between the two speakers made me realize that there is a richer and deeper way to know nature and recreation and to think about the land than the narrative that I have been brought up with. Myia's relationship with nature and the land resonated with me and made the status quo expedition narrative look narrow and selfish. I wanted to learn more about this other view of recreation and connection to the land.

Adapting the research project to a new environment

This Applied Research Project was approved June 2019 – my first meeting with Rick Oulette, Director of Indigenous Education and Services at Langara College was on July 3, 2019 – the result of this meeting was the advice to wait until Fall 2020 to interview Musqueam Elders as Langara College was involved in building a relationship with the Musqueam community and Rick didn't feel the time was right to connect to the Elders for interviews for this Research Project. It was a disappointing start but challenged me to re-think the purpose and methodology

of the research project. The outcome of this meeting was to shift the research focus to what I could do to prepare and educate myself more about Indigenous research methodologies and protocols as a first step before interviewing. As I was shifting the research purpose, COVID-19 hit and everything changed -- again I had to adapt to this new environment with COVID-19 restrictions. As a result not all of the deliverables in the proposal could be completed.

In re-thinking and adapting this project I realized that there was important work that had to be done for me to understand this area more deeply prior to interviewing elders in the Musqueam Nation. I also realized this commitment to listening and learning about Indigenous perspectives of recreation cannot be answered in one Research Project. This report represents a first step to an ongoing commitment to exploring and incorporating Indigenous world views and perspectives in teaching recreation. The following steps were taken for this research:

Read the following books:

- Read Pulling Together Series: A guide for Indigenization of Post Secondary Institutions <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfoundations/>
- Potlatch as Pedagogy: Learning Through Ceremony by Sarah Florence Davidson and Robert Davidson
- Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body and Spirit by Jo-Ann Archibald
- Decolonizing Methodologies
- Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology
- Truth-Telling: Indigenous Perspectives on Working with Municipal Governments by Kamala Todd
- Working in a Good Way: A best practices guide for engaging and working with Indigenous Peoples on trails and outdoor recreation projects in British Columbia.
- Decolonize First workbook by Ta7taliya Michelle Nahanee

Participated in:

- Reconciliation through indigenization MOOC offered through UBC <https://pdce.educ.ubc.ca/reconciliation/>
- Introduction to Indigenous Pedagogies workshop by Natalie Knight, June 18, 2020

Conversations with Natalie Knight, Curriculum Consultant, and Mary Jane, Elder in Residence, Langara College about listening as a research method and what questions to ask to understand Indigenous Perspectives on Recreation.

Action steps included incorporating Indigenous practices and protocols into my classes that reflected what I was learning about Indigenous worldviews -- Introductions, Land Acknowledgement, requirements for students to learn and share Indigenous perspectives within assignments.

Deliverables completed:

- Deeper understanding of recreation within an indigenous context and perspective
- Integration of these perspectives into the courses I teach in the Recreation Studies Dept., with a priority of updating RECR 1160: Foundations of Leisure and Recreation, and RECR 1166: Valuing Diversity in Leadership
- Understanding of Indigenous research methodology
- Understanding of what it means to “listen” as a researcher within this Indigenous context (this was adapted to “listening” to books/websites/ research/students - didn’t have the

opportunity to listen to people during interviews – only one interview with Mary Jane – Elder in Residence, Langara College)

- Sharing these understandings with Recreation Studies Faculty as a resource to indigenizing curriculum
- Final Report of Applied Research Project

Deliverables that could not be completed:

- Connection to First Nations Elders and local indigenous community as a beginning of potential relationship building for the Recreation Studies Dept. – Mary Jane, Langara’s Elder in Residence was interviewed for this Project prior to COVID-19

Worldviews

Recreation is a human experience. The framework we use to name and understand recreation is based on our own worldview and within Canada this is based on Western, colonized worldview. The concept of leisure is a western concept. Categories used to describe recreation, sports, culture, arts, physical activity, health, wellness are categories we have created within our own world view.

When I was creating interview questions. My first question was:

What is recreation? – What does recreation mean to you?

I realized in sharing my questions with Natalie Knight for feedback that this may not even be the right question as it already assumes a western name, category and world view. I explained that my understanding of recreation is from the Greek word “Eudemonia” which is better translated as “Human Flourishing” (Shamir and Eilam 2005). In our conversation Natalie suggested:

When do you feel most connected to: your community, elders, your body, land, ancestors?

When do you feel that you have grown?

Re-wording and re-thinking these questions helped me to see a bigger view of my own connectedness and how that is recreation. I began to see more clearly the relationship between colonialism and leisure, how colonization has not only restricted our view of a fuller understanding of recreation, but how it has impacted Indigenous people’s understandings of the western concept of leisure. This is an area that Dr. Henhawk has researched at the University of Waterloo by conducting interviews with people in his community about their relationship to sport and recreation (University of Manitoba, 2020).

At the root of understanding indigenous perspectives of recreation is critically understanding our own world view and acknowledging the world view that Canadian recreation is currently situated in. Our perspectives and experiences of recreation in Canada are embedded in colonization. How can we take recreation out of a colonized context – what is the value of doing that? Whose voices aren’t heard in our history and understanding of recreation in Canada?

The following quote from Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. (ICTI) identifies the differences between the Western and Indigenous world views.

The root of the difference between the worldviews is that they generally subscribe to opposite approaches to knowledge, connectedness, and science. Indigenous cultures focus on a holistic understanding of the whole that emerged from the millennium of their existence and experiences. Traditional Western worldviews tend to be more concerned with science and concentrate on compartmentalized knowledge and then focus on understanding the bigger, related picture. (ICTI, 2020)

When we are teaching recreation do we question the world view we are teaching from and acknowledge that this is only one perspective of recreation?

The following document summarizes important differences in Indigenous and Western worldviews. It is important to understand that this document is a generalization – that indigenous and western world views are more complex - but this generalization is a place to start understanding the difference in the two views and how that can impact understanding and teaching recreation.

As you read the following document, consider if you would understand and teach recreation differently if you had an Indigenous worldview.

Indigenous worldviews (I) vs Western worldviews (W)

1. **(I)** spiritually orientated society. System based on belief and spiritual world.
1. **(W)** Scientific, skeptical. Requiring proof as a basis of belief.
2. **(I)** There can be many truths; truths are dependent upon individual experiences.
2. **(W)** There is only one truth, based on science or Western style law.
3. **(I)** Society operates in a state of relatedness. Everything and everyone is related. There is real belief that people, objects and the environment are **all connected**. Law, kinship and spirituality reinforce this connectedness. Identity comes from connections.
3. **(W)** Compartmentalized society, becoming more so.
4. **(I)** the **land is sacred** and usually given by a creator or Supreme Being.
4. **(W)** the land and its resources should be available for development and extraction for the benefit of humans.
5. **(I)** Time is non-linear, cyclical in nature. Time is measured in cyclical events. The seasons are central to this cyclical concept.

5. **(W)** Time is usually linearly structured and future orientated. The framework of months, years, days etc. reinforces the linear structure.
6. **(I)** Feeling comfortable is measured by the quality of your relationships with people.
6. **(W)** Feeling comfortable is related to how successful you feel you have been in achieving your goals.
7. **(I)** Human beings are not the most important in the world.
7. **(W)** Human beings are most important in the world.
8. **(I)** Amassing wealth is important for the good of the community
8. **(W)** Amassing wealth is for personal gain
- (Indigenous Corporate Training Inc, 2020)

An example of the impact of different world views is explored in the following 8 minute podcast. The podcast shares a study of native and non-native children and how they view nature based on what their own learned worldview. Non-native children viewed nature as hierarchal, while native children viewed it as interconnected. "The scientists say those distinctive worldviews actually change the way we think, learn and reason." (Splitzer 2012). How can we critically recognize our own worldview and challenge ourselves to learn more about the Indigenous worldview?

Link to podcast - Clever Apes #29: Nature and human nature By Gabriel Spitzer

April 3, 2012, 10:16 a.m. CT

<https://www.wbez.org/stories/clever-apes-29-nature-and-human-nature/88afa2cb-9dd9-472d-82eb-051dd407f777>

In my teaching, I am looking at how to create assignments that encourage students to research and share Indigenous perspectives and in doing this expand their own worldview.

In RECR 4150 – Community Recreation Systems there are Five Challenges as assessments in the course.

1. Your own wellness system
2. Connecting people to nature system
3. Leisure Ideal System
4. Solving a Problem System
5. Your Choice System

For some Challenges I have asked students to research and explore an indigenous perspective within the system. Spring 2020 was the first run at this new assignment format and reflected room to be more intentional with how this is done. Many of the students provided an acknowledgement of the land and connection to First Nations as an Indigenous perspective – but I think with more shared context and better questions, students can be encouraged to look

deeper. Another way to do this may be to focus on recognizing how the system is part of a larger colonization narrative. This is an area I plan to work on this year.

Decolonizing Recreation

It is well beyond the scope of this paper to explore how to decolonize recreation. Within the scope of this paper though it is valuable to think about how we know recreation, where that knowledge comes from and ask critical questions to uncover systemic bias and disrupt the colonial mindset about recreation. In doing this we can understand more fully what recreation is.

Wade Davis in his book, *The Wayfinders* talks about the effects of the disappearance of languages in the world. “A language, of course, is not merely a set of grammatical rules or a vocabulary. It is a flash of the human spirit, the vehicle by which the soul of each particular culture comes into the material world. Every language is an old-growth forest of the mind, a watershed of thought, an ecosystem of spiritual possibilities.” (Davis, 2009).

If we think about recreation as a construct of the Western worldview and language. What experience is “recreation” within an Indigenous world view? Is there a similar word and category in their language and understanding? Or is there something else that we can learn more about recreation beyond our own language and world view limitations?

Understanding recreation in a fuller way beyond our own western worldview comes from asking critical questions. Who created the concept of leisure recreation? Who benefitted from defining it that way? Who benefitted from telling the history of recreation in a certain way and whose voices are included and excluded in that telling?

A Mi'kway educator from Nova Scotia, cited in Marie Battiste's book *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, observes that “the most serious problem with the current system of education lies not in its failure to liberate the human potential among Aboriginal peoples but in its quest to limit thought to cognitive imperialistic policies and practices... Cognitive imperialism denies people their language and cultural integrity by maintaining the legitimacy of only one language, one culture, and one frame of reference.” (Mercurieff and Roderick, 2013)

Decolonization

In their book, *Pulling Together*, the authors offer the following understanding of Decolonization that is helpful as a lens to look at understanding where our own understanding of recreation is situated:

Decolonization refers to the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. On the one hand, decolonization involves dismantling structures that perpetuate the status quo, problematizing dominant discourses, and addressing unbalanced power dynamics. On the other hand, decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches and weeding out settler biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being. Decolonization necessitates shifting our frames of reference with regard to the knowledge we hold; examining how we have arrived at such

knowledge; and considering what we need to do to change misconceptions, prejudice, and assumptions about Indigenous Peoples. For individuals of settler identity, decolonization is the process of examining your beliefs about Indigenous Peoples and culture by learning about yourself in relationship to the communities where you live and the people with whom you interact. (Pulling Together)

Stanley Park in Vancouver, British Columbia is a place I have visited often and I understood the history of that place. On a walking tour with Maria Lopes, Coordinator, Arts, Culture and Engagement, City of Vancouver as part of a British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) conference I learned that the history of Stanley Park I knew was not the full history. I learned that the First Nations Peoples who were living on the land were displaced in order to create the park. Vancouver Parks Board has begun colonial audit of Stanley Park as a first step in the Truth and Reconciliation process. (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation 2018). The information on the walking tour opened my eyes to how I connected to this land that I recreated on. This created a fuller understanding of a recreation place and now when I am in Stanley Park recreating I have a deeper knowledge of the history of this place – increasing my recreation experience. This an example of how we can look at decolonizing recreation.

Who we are – where we come from – identity

I volunteer in the Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue team in North Vancouver. I was volunteering at the World Marine Rescue Congress June 2019 and met a group of delegates from Ahousaht who were presenting. One of them asked me where I am from, and I said, "Station 2 in North Vancouver", then he said, no, where are you from? At first I didn't understand why he was asking again -- I thought about it, and I said, I was born in Esperanza and now I live in North Vancouver, and he said, really...my dad was born in Friendly Cove (which is now called Yuquot, and relatively close to Esperanza). In that deeper introduction we had made an interesting connection.

We had a conversation about how when he asks people where they're from they say where they work, and I said I was learning more about this, and I appreciated the question was pointing to the bigger picture of what land and people you are connected to. I appreciated him calling me out on that. For me, it was a really interesting moment of thinking when he didn't accept my first answer. It challenged my own cultural practice of introduction and presented a different perspective in how we identify ourselves and it is really worth thinking about as I shift my understanding to encompass a worldview.

First Nations have a protocol of introducing themselves that is different than our western cultural practice. They identify who they are and their connections through kinship ties, acknowledge their relations and their connections to homelands and the land they may now be on as a guest. This is an approach, a practice, and a protocol for setting up the space in a good way to listen, share, and get to know one another.

Sharing this fuller aspect of who we are and acknowledging where we are -- rather than what we do is a different perspective of how we identify ourselves and one that is worth exploring more. It allows others to make connections to us and encourages us to see how we are connected to the land and other people. How would our learning communities in our classes and in our recreation programs benefit from using this bigger way of introducing ourselves?

In Pulling Together: Foundations Guide, the authors share that an introduction should include who you are and where you come from, which means your family's cultural and geographical background prior to being a settler in North America, (i.e. Where is your family indigenous to?) To be clear, you would not say you are from Canada or the United States. You would include who your parents and grandparents are and where they are from. This sharing allows a deeper understanding of your family lineage and situates you in relation to the people you are interacting with. (Pulling Together)

Situating our identity and how we introduce and locate ourselves within a larger context can create more connection in our classes and recreation programs. It respects and upholds values other than where we work or what we do. As indigenous cultural practice has taught me, recognizing our family, our geographical connections, our roles in life and how we contribute to the community creates a fuller picture of who we are.

This understanding of our identity and how we are situated is also embedded in Indigenous research and methodologies. In the article, "Indigenous Research Methods: A systematic Review", authors Alexandra Dawson, Elain Toombs, and Christopher Mushquash from Lakehead University note that there is a relational process required in self-locating and that many Indigenous groups hold relationality as an important part of identity. Another benefit of self-locating is acknowledging the enmeshed nature of one's personal and professional lives and identity, which the authors argue cannot be separated. (2017)

This fall I plan to build on indigenous learning of Land Acknowledgements and focus on connecting to this fuller identity as well with introductions during my first classes with the students.

Connection to the Land

The earlier story about Myia's presentation at the Vancouver Film Festival reflected a different perspective of how to connect to the land than the western world view.

Outdoor recreation – expeditions – narrative of conquering nature – taking, owning, -- VS. Harmony, reciprocity – taking and giving, being grateful, thankful, connection to the land.

White approach of "conquering the land" expedition whereas Indigenous perspective of learning from the land, thanking the land.

What are the effects of each of the worldviews? Each leads to different actions and interactions with nature and different experiences in recreation.

An excerpt from Indigenous Corporate Training website explains more about the connection between land and identity from an Indigenous perspective

Spiritual Connection

First Nation relationship to the land is spiritual and that spiritual connection is constitutionally recognized and legally protected. Please keep in mind that we are speaking in general terms when we talk about the First Nation spiritual connection with the land. Each Nation has its own unique relationship with the land and if you are

working with a community, finding out that connection and relationship should be part of your research.

Just as all First Nations are not one homogeneous group, the land is not spiritually homogeneous. Certain areas are considered sacred sites therefore are of significantly higher spirituality and are fundamental to the survival of First Nation culture. So, whatever undermines the sanctity of a sacred site undermines the culture of the First Nation. Access to the land and participation in land use decision making processes to protect their spirituality, cultural practices, and traditions has been a key concern for First Nations since European contact. (Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. 2020)

Acknowledging the land we are on

In fall 2019, I began to use Land Acknowledgement to start each class. I wasn't sure what to say or how to do this and met with Natalie Knight, Curriculum Consultant in the Teaching and Curriculum Development Centre at Langara College to discuss some ideas and options for scripts and rationale I could share with the students about why we were doing this as a class. The first times I did the Land Acknowledgement in front of the class I felt awkward and I was sensitive to not doing it right or saying exactly the right words, but as I am learning more about Indigenous perspectives, encouraging students and getting more practice – I have become more aware of the purpose and ensuring that the words and the intention came from my heart and out of respect. Using this protocol more often has changed my own awareness of my connection to the land, the environment and the colonial world view of the land that I was raised with.

I wanted to ensure that my land acknowledgement was coming from an authentic place as a teacher and not a token gesture for political correctness. I grew up within a culture that didn't pay attention to the land I was on and acknowledging that this wasn't vacant land given to my ancestors, disrupts my own worldview and forces me to think more about my role and place on this land. Making a Land Acknowledgement at the beginning of class introduces a new way of seeing the world, it creates an awareness of where we are situated physically and what the history is of the land we are meeting on. It respects First Nations Culture and acknowledges and sets the tone for a respectful and inclusive community.

Laurie Mejer Drees, Chair First Nations Studies at Vancouver Island University says about the practice of Land Acknowledgements, "Recognizing the land and the communities informs people of the colonial history of our region, specifically that treaty process/land surrenders have not yet taken place. The land is what hosts us all, it is a precious resource that holds all our lives. Acknowledging where we are is good for our souls and keeps us humble and grateful. It also makes a formal acknowledgement of the need for reconciliation." (Campbell River Mirror 2018).

In my learning and teaching I see the protocol of land acknowledgement as a good first step for myself and the students to understanding Indigenous Perspectives. The following section outlines the actions I took to introduce this protocol and what the outcomes were.

RECR 1160 Foundations of Leisure and Recreation – First year, first term, Mixed Mode delivery

For the first two weeks in my RECR 1160 class, I did the Land Acknowledgment at the beginning of class and talked about why it was important to me and to us as recreation leaders in our community. I then I asked for volunteers to do the Land Acknowledgement in future classes. I emailed students ahead of their date with a script they could use.

Example of email:

Thank you for volunteering to do the Land Acknowledgement at the beginning of our RECR 1160 class.

Here is a possible script for you to use. You are welcome to bring your own ideas to it. The main purpose is to respectfully acknowledge that we are gathering on the lands of the Musqueam First Nation.

"I acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional and unceded lands of the Musqueam First Nation. I am grateful to work, play and learn on this land."

You are welcome to read off a document or memorize it. Your choice.

Thank you again, this is an important part of creating a respectful, inclusive community.

Each student in the course volunteered at some point to do the Land Acknowledgement. I was impressed with their willingness to participate in this protocol. Some students read from the script, some memorized it, other students did more research into learning about the land that they lived on or worked on and added that information into the acknowledgement. No marks were attached to doing the Land Acknowledgement. I explained it within the perspective of having responsibilities within your family that you don't get paid for – you do them because you are part of the family.

Beginning each class with a Land Acknowledgement created a sacred moment and a feeling of being grounded and feeling grateful as a class. I was surprised at how powerful this was and how much the students appreciated it. We began to rely on this protocol to start the class in a good way. I will continue to bring this protocol including asking students to volunteer to lead it into my on-line zoom class sessions in the fall.

RECR 2361 – Applied Leadership in Recreation Organizations – Second year, first term, face to face delivery

In RECR 2361 – I have a practice of having each student be Class Leader for one of the classes. In their role as Class Leader they share a Land Acknowledgement, and then bring a thought, wisdom or perspective forward from the last class with information on how it informed their own leadership practice. They also share a leadership quote and why it has influenced their leadership. At the end of the class they share 3 leadership moments they observed during the class. I added the Land Acknowledgement piece last fall and similarly to the experience in RECR 1160 – it has created a thoughtful sacred moment at the beginning of class when we reflect on where we are and who has been there before us.

Other courses

In my fully on-line courses of RECR 3230 Leadership and Management in Community Recreation, 4150 Community Recreation Systems and 4400 Applied Major Project, students are asked to do an introduction video and include acknowledging the land they are on in that video.

Discussion Question

Hello and welcome to our Class. Getting to know each other can be tough with on-line courses so this is our class introduction DQ.

Please make a video of yourself answering the following questions so we can get to know you a little bit more. I find videos really help to bring faces and names to life!

For this video, go to a place that inspires you and share the following information:

- Your Name
- Where you are and why it inspires you
- Share the best thing you did over the Christmas Holidays and what made it so great
- Do you currently work in the recreation field? Which area?
- Provide a land acknowledgement. Find out what traditional First Nations lands you work and/or live on.

I post an introduction video for these classes that shares the same information.

The outcomes for including Land Acknowledgement in these courses is it began to normalize the importance of knowing whose land we are on, it provides a beginning to encourage critically thinking about what we take for granted and introduces another worldview.

I plan to continue this Land Acknowledgement practice with the students leading in our on-line classes and zoom sessions this fall.

Story Telling and Learning

This section provides a beginning, there is a lot more exploring and listening that needs to happen to understand storytelling and learning within the First Nations experience. I realize that Storytelling and learning is a pathway into understanding Indigenous perspectives of recreation more deeply. In listening to Mary Jane, Langara's Elder in Residence, she shared storytelling as a way of teaching how to work things out, working together, resilience, wellness, spiritual connection. Exploring this area more deeply would involve listening to Indigenous Elders, Knowledge-Keepers and Story tellers which wasn't possible within the COVID-19 restrictions of this project.

I am curious and interested in the oral tradition of storytelling within First Nations and how it connects to teaching and learning about recreation. I am interested in how hearing a story engages the listener in a different learning way than reading a written story. I am interested in the protocols of storytelling and the roles and responsibilities of the story teller and the listener. I would like to explore more deeply both looking at storytelling as a form of recreation and as a way to teach and learn.

I have included some quotes that could be used as a framework to understand more about the connection between storytelling and recreation from Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xiiem from her book *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body and spirit*. I acknowledge that

there is a deeper context in her book for these ideas, but including them provides a way begin looking at how they encourage the deeper connection between storytelling and recreation.

“Having a relationship with stories – listener must become a participant who is actively engaged with the story...Synergistic interaction between storyteller, listener, and story is another critical storywork principle.” (33)

“Stories remind us about being whole and healthy” (p. 11). That “Stories have the power to make our hearts, minds, bodies and spirits work together.” (p. 12) That stories reflect the “indigenous ideal of living “a good life” (p. 12) “..... a respectful and spiritual life; a wholesome life” (p. 13)

“Themes of tradition, change, survival, and strength are strongly presented”. (p. 21)

“Sharing what one has learned is an important Indigenous tradition. This type of sharing can take the form of a story of personal life experience and is done with a compassionate mind and love for others. Walter Lightning (1992), of the Samson Cree Nation, learned that the compassionate mind combines physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual learning with humility, truth and love.” (p. 2)

“Some teachings from my nation, the Sto:lo, are about cultural respect, responsibility, and reciprocity. According to these teachings, important knowledge and wisdom contain power. If one comes to understand and appreciate the power of a particular knowledge, then one must be ready to share and teach it respectfully and responsibly to others in order for this knowledge and its power to continue. One cannot be said to have wisdom until others acknowledge an individuals respectful and responsible use and teaching of knowledge to others. Usually, wisdom is attributed only to the Elders, but this is not because they have lived a long time. What one does with knowledge and the insight gained from knowledge are the criteria for being called an “Elder”. Continuation of the Sto:lo knowledge and power relationship happens through a reciprocal process between teachers and learners.” (p. 3)

In exploring storytelling I understand the importance of Indigenous context and am sensitive to my own colonial lens and imposing my own agenda on this. In this spirit Jo-Ann Archibald writes, “Native people have always been asked for their comments on and contributions to established agenda topics rather than simply being requested to tell their own story. “ (Indigenous Storywork p. 17). I think storytelling and its connection to recreation is important to explore in future research, but thought and consultation with Indigenous people needs to be put into how to do this in the right and respectful way.

First People’s Principles of Learning

Background on First People’s Principles of Learning by Jo-Anne Chrona:

In 2006/2007, The BC Ministry of Education partnered with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) to create the English 12 First Peoples course. The development of this curriculum included significant input from Indigenous knowledge-keepers and educators from BC and was unique in a number of ways. First, the process began with the creation of an

Advisory Committee which included, among others, Indigenous scholars and educators. The Indigenous Elders, scholars and Knowledge-Keepers on the Advisory Committee helped to ensure that the course was able to authentically embody aspects of First Peoples' values around teaching and learning. This meant that the course had to take into account, not only authentic First Peoples knowledge and perspectives, but also reflect First Peoples' epistemology and pedagogy. Second, it included the development of the First Peoples Principles of Learning. In an effort to help the course focus more authentically on First Peoples' experiences, values, beliefs and lived realities, the following set of learning principles specific to First Peoples were articulated by the Indigenous Elder, scholars and knowledge-keepers to guide the development of curriculum and the teaching of the course. (Chrona, 2014)

First People's Principles of Learning:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

More Information about what is currently happening in the BC School Curriculum with these principles is found at the following link:

<https://firstpeoplesprinciplesoflearning.wordpress.com/background-and-current-context/>

As this research paper indicates, I have started using some of these learning principles to help guide my teaching pedagogy. I believe students come with their own experiences and knowledge and I try to connect the theory to that. I also believe that knowledge is more connected and holistic than the way we separate it into categories to learn. I agree with Jo-Anne Chrona's reflection on the importance of these principles, "These initiative echo what has already been known by First Peoples – that education is a complex process that is personal, holistic; embedded in relationship to each other, to self, and to the land; and is most effective when it is authentic and relevant." (2014) The First Peoples' Principles of Learning combined with the Pulling Together Series create a thoughtful way forward to create a more diverse worldview and pedagogy.

Looking forward

As faculty in the Recreation Studies Department it is important to continue to critically examine our curriculum and ways of knowing and teaching recreation. As this research points to, the perspective of recreation that we teach is a narrow, colonized view of recreation. Exploring the

Indigenous worldview helps us to understand recreation in a fuller way and share critical questions and understanding with our students.

More opportunities to learn more about Indigenous perspectives and pedagogy:

- Working through the Decolonizing Practices workbook together as a faculty team (scheduled for September 2020 faculty meeting).
- Read Pulling Together Series: A guide for Indigenization of Post Secondary Institutions <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfoundations/>
- Share our experiences within our own faculty and Langara faculty of actions to decolonize and indigenize our classes
- Participate in Workshops on Indigenizing curriculum and Indigenous Pedagogies by Natalie Knight, Curriculum Consultant, Langara
- Participate in the Reconciliation through indigenization MOOC offered through UBC <https://pdce.educ.ubc.ca/reconciliation/>

Further Research

Two topics have been identified in this work as important for future research projects:

Decolonizing recreation

Storytelling and learning as a pathway to understanding recreation through an indigenous perspective.

Conclusion

This work presents a beginning to exploring Indigenous Perspectives in recreation. This research was restricted by the COVID-19 pandemic but adaptations to the original proposal maintained the value and importance of the work. Key areas of understanding worldviews, identity and introductions, connection to the land, storytelling and learning, and First Peoples' Learning Principles are identified as Indigenous perspectives that would be valuable to explore and incorporate into our own pedagogy as recreation educators. Critically examining our curriculum to understand of how our current understanding of recreation is situated in a western colonized perspective is advocated as a first step in bringing Indigenous perspectives to our knowledge. There is value to recreation educators in exploring the landscape of decolonization and indigenization within the post-secondary recreation studies context. The benefit is a deeper and fuller understanding of recreation.

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Appendix A

Indigenous Perspectives of Recreation: A listening Project

Proposal for Applied Research Project – Recreation Studies Dept., Langara College

Submitted May 27 2019 by Janet Ready, Faculty

The purpose of this Applied Research project is to explore and understand indigenous perspectives of recreation.

Background and Rationale

There is not one knowledge. I have realized recently that Leisure theory is very rooted within a western paradigm, reflecting a very narrow view and understanding of recreation. This research project aims to explore another way of knowing recreation with the awareness that there is deep value as a Recreation Educator in gaining a broader and deeper understanding of recreation. There is also a responsibility to do this work as Langara College and our work as faculty in the Department of Recreation Studies is situated on the unceded and traditional territory of the Musqueam First Nation.

Within the RECR 1160: Foundations of Leisure and Recreation course, there is a section on historical influences of recreation in Canada. It begins with Greek philosophers and their ideas of leisure and recreation and moves through the Industrial Revolution in Europe and into early Canadian history. The Playground movement recognized as the beginning of Canadian Community Recreation Centres began in Boston, MA in 1885 and spread to Canada in 1906. Boys and Girls Clubs originated in the Eastern United States in the late 1860's and the YMCA started in England and was established in Canada in 1886 (McLean and Hurd 2012). Absent in this historical influences of recreation in Canada is an understanding and recognition of Indigenous perspectives of Recreation.

Within the recreation field there has recently been significant commitment by the Vancouver Park Board to address some of the Calls to Action that came out of the Truth and Reconciliation Report. In June 2015, City of Vancouver Council passed a motion directing staff to provide recommendations on how to move forward on actions recommended by the

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). Following this, the Urban Aboriginal Committee passed a motion requesting the Park Board also undertake a review of the TRC Calls to Action and in January 2016, Vancouver Park Board directed staff to take on 11 strategies which fall within Park Board jurisdiction (Todd 2017).

Within the landscape of community recreation, this move by a large Municipal organization to recognize and support reconciliation and lead change is important in creating a recreation lens to look at how this work can be done. The Vancouver Park Board vision for reconciliation is “An evolvable organization in which every employee and Commissioner recognizes the humanity in themselves by recognizing and respecting the humanity of First Peoples; and an organization that sets a worldwide example in treating Reconciliation as a decolonization process.” (Reconciliation Mission, Vision & Values Statement, Vancouver Park Board).

Langara College is working to strengthen the connections between the Musqueam people and the College with is situated on Musqueam land . Actions by Langara College reflect an understanding of their role and responsibility to First Nations as a Post Secondary Institute. Within the Academic plan, priority three is Aboriginal Initiatives and this focus has created awareness and support for the value of indigenous knowledge and perspectives. The Teaching and Curriculum Development Centre (TCDC) recently hired an Indigenous Curriculum consultant to support faculty and in naming ceremony on January 11, 2016, Langara received the Musqueam name meaning house of teachings:

snəwəyət̓ leləm̓.
THE COLLEGE OF HIGHER LEARNING.

Another initiative that aligns with this research project is the recent publication of “Pulling Together: A Guide for Indigenization of Post-Secondary Institutions – Professional Learning Series” by BC Campus, guided by the Indigenization Project Steering Committee. This series of publications encourages and supports Post Secondary Instructors and Administrators in bringing indigenous perspectives into their work. The authors of the Foundations Guide for Indigenization of Post Secondary Institutions document, quote Universities Canada, “Higher education offers great potential for reconciliation and a renewed relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.” (2015) and similarly, Colleges and Institutions Canada notes that “Indigenous education will strengthen colleges’ and institutes’ contribution to improving the lives of learners and communities.” (Wilson 2019).

In their guide for Teachers and Instructors within the Pulling Together series, authors state, “As public post-secondary teachers and instructors, we have a responsibility to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills necessary to work with and build relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities....Indigenous issues can no longer be considered a fringe concern; instead, Indigenous views, perspectives, and self-determination form part of the learning landscape in our institutions.” (Allan, Biin, Chenoweth et al 2019)

The Alignment of the Vancouver Park Board’s commitment to reconciliation and decolonizing the Vancouver Park Board, Langara’s commitment to building a relationship with Musqueam, and growing awareness of the value of indigenous perspectives within Post Secondary, creates opportune timing and support for this research to move forward.

Intent and Description of the Proposed Research Project

The intent of this research project is to initiate conversations about recreation with members of the Indigenous community that lead to deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives of recreation. Guiding this process will be principles of indigenous research methodology and paradigm. In all areas of this research required protocols will be learned and used respectfully. This research is also being approached with the awareness of the impact and legacy of colonization of Canada’s Indigenous people and with the values of respect, humility, openness, curiosity and responsibility.

A significant theme that came out of Kamala Todd’s report for the Vancouver Park Board, “Truth-Telling: Indigenous Perspectives on Working with Municipal Governments” is the importance of listening as a way of opening space, and the beginning of learning and relationship building. (Todd, 2017). Indigenous Research Methodology will be explored as a framework to guide the research, but the initial methodology will proceed as a “listening project” using guided understanding from the following quotes:

As an educator I am often reminded that listening with our whole self is not necessarily practised in the academy. I learned this the hard way. One of my instructors in my graduate program pointed out to me that I rarely “spoke up” in class. I reflected upon this feedback and thought of all the times that I was eager to participate in the classroom dialogue, only to be “beaten to the punch” by classmates who either spoke up as soon as one had finished speaking or who seemingly dominated the classroom dialogue (almost always!). This self-reflection led me to

understand the different ways I, as an Indigenous person, listen in comparison to many of my non-Indigenous counterparts. I began to recognize that oftentimes people would be preparing what they were going to say while the other person was still talking. While I on the other hand listened, completely listened, and only when one finishes speaking do I think about how I might respond. This is true, I came to learn, for many of the Indigenous students in my classes and at our university. (Shirley Hardman – personal communication, 2017) in Pulling Together – (Teachers and Instructors)

“Listening to hear requires that you hold the information that has been shared in order for multiple meanings to come forward, rather than immediately responding or reacting. What you are hearing are your values, beliefs, and perceptions sifting through the shared information” (Reciprocity and Multiple ways – Pulling Together - Teachers and Instructors)

“A productive pedagogical approach therefore is to build into courses a methodology that reminds students – and teachers – that dis-ease can be a valuable starting point for a more healthy alliance with Indigenous people...[L]istening – or hearing – that the “other” has to say, in fact, must be a risk-taking venture in order for a change in thought, perception and action to occur. If we are only to hear what is safe or familiar, there will be no conflict, no “poles of contradiction”, no impetus or motivation for transformation.” (McGloin 2015).

“What a teacher needs to be mindful of is that Indigenizing one’s practice is an emotional journey as well as an intellectual examination of how systems of knowledge can complement and coexist in any field of study.” (Respectfully Opening your Heart and Mind to Indigenization – Pulling Together - Teachers and Instructors)

“The complexity of Indigenization is realizing that there are multiple truths and no single clear answer; so as educators, we need to trust the unlearning and relearning process and be humble while engaging in the process.” (Holding Space – Pulling Together - Teachers and instructors)

- “Ask your questions with the understanding that some of the work required to answer them is yours.
- Ask whose truths are valued and represented in your curriculum and discipline, what counts as knowledge, and why this is.

- Be aware of the space you take and the space you give...entails giving yourself time to explore and appreciate Indigenous worldviews and taking the time to understand and disrupt beliefs and misconceptions.” (Holding Space – Pulling Together - teachers and instructors)

Deliverables

- Deeper understanding of recreation within an indigenous context and perspective
- Integration of these perspectives into the courses I teach in the Recreation Studies Dept., with a priority of updating RECR 1160: Foundations of Leisure and Recreation, and RECR 1166: Valuing Diversity in Leadership
- Connection to First Nations Elders and local indigenous community as a beginning of potential relationship building for the Recreation Studies Dept.
- Understanding of Indigenous research methodology
- Understanding of what it means to “listen” as a researcher within this Indigenous context
- Sharing these understanding with Recreation Studies Faculty as a resource to indigenizing curriculum
- Possibly presenting information through BCRPA Symposium
- Final report of Applied Research Project

Timeline

- Deliverables completed by April 2020

Connection to Langara’s Academic Plan

This project connects strongly to the Langara College Academic Plan and Strategic Plan as well as the values of the college in significant ways:

This research project connects to the Academic Plan Priority One – Learning and Teaching. The researcher currently teaches the RECR 4400 Applied Major Project Capstone course where students are required to conduct a comprehensive research project with a recreation organization. This research proposal ensures that the instructors stay current in the recreation field and in research methodology that provides a model for what the students

are expected to do in the RECR 4400. The researcher also teaches RECR 1160 Foundations of Leisure, and RECR 66 Valuing Diversity in Leadership which could directly benefit from the understanding of Indigenous perspectives in recreation.

This research project connects to the Academic Plan Priority Three – Aboriginal Initiatives. Situated on Musqueam land, Langara has an opportunity, and a responsibility to expand understanding of Aboriginal cultures and peoples. Article 3.2 requires us to expand awareness, acceptance, and inclusiveness of Aboriginal cultures within Langara. Article 3.3 Strengthen partnerships with Aboriginal communities. This research project would connect to both of these areas of this Academic Plan priority.

This research project connects to the Langara’s Strategic Priority of being “Student Focused”. It will provide Langara’s diverse student community with the services, programs, skills and experiences to be productive, creative, and engaged global citizens. (Langara Strategic Plan). By supporting Langara’s Recreation faculty to conduct applied research within the Recreation field, Langara’s Recreation Studies Department will be able to use this research to enhance the curriculum in the Recreation courses and connect them strongly to what is currently happening in the Recreation Field.

This research project connects to Langara’s Strategic Priority of “Employee sustainability” – by providing ongoing opportunities for leadership and professional development at all levels of the organization. This project provides an opportunity for the researcher to learn and use Indigenous protocols and build relationships with First Nations Elders and community. It also enables the researcher to gain a broader perspective of knowledge and ways of knowing that is important to the role of teaching within the Post Secondary context.

This research project also connects to Langara College’s Strategic Priority of “Communication and Advocacy”. This project serves to “expand Langara’s profile with key stakeholders” (Langara Strategic Plan). This applied research project creates a valuable connection for the Langara College Recreation Studies Department to the Indigenous community and expands the profile of the faculty and program of Applied Researchers in this area.

This research project connects to all of the Langara College Values – with a specific focus on the “innovative” category as Langara College is currently seeking opportunities for Applied Research that is well connected to the community:

- **Student-Focused**
Decisions are made with learners in mind.
- **Collegial**
Open and inclusive discussion in a respectful environment.

- **Innovative**
New ideas are welcomed and integrated where possible.
- **Accessible**
Programs and services are accessible to learners across the community.

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